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Identical letters dated 17 September 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and with reference to document S/2015/688 of 8 September 2015 and document S/2015/693 of 9 September 2015, I write to inform the Security Council that the United Kingdom, Australia and France are currently taking military measures against the Syrian Arab Republic. To that end, they invoke a distorted reading of the intention of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, one that is blatantly inconsistent with the Charter and the resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015), all of which emphasize that States must respect the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Article 51 of the Charter provides that nothing in the Charter shall impair or detract from States' inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed force attacks a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. France, Britain and Australia claim that they are taking such measures at the request of the Republic of Iraq and in support of the right of Iraq to self-defence. In that connection, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to explain the following points:

- Syria is surprised that certain States, some of which are permanent members of the Security Council, are violating international law and the Charter of the United Nations and have the temerity to explain their actions by distorting the meaning of this important and sensitive paragraph of the Charter in a manner that risks causing chaos and wars across the world. Syria has not made any request to that effect. Moreover, the Security Council has adopted numerous resolutions on counter-terrorism in Syria that are binding on States Members of the United Nations.

- In accordance with its constitutional duties, and on instructions from the Syrian Government, the Syrian Arab Army has, over the last four years, indefatigably fought such armed terrorist groups as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Nusrah Front and other organizations associated with Al-Qaida and supported by Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and certain well-known western States, which arm, shelter and train the terrorist groups. Any actor that genuinely wishes to fight terrorism in Syria must recognize the

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achievements of the Syrian Arab Army and the Syrian armed forces in combating terrorism, and must coordinate with them.

- The claims, particularly those made in the Australian letter, are belied by the actions taken by the Syrian Arab Army to combat ISIL, the Nusrah Front and other armed terrorist organizations. Such claims are foolish, mendacious and need not be dignified with a response. Indeed, the so-called international coalition led by America has yet to achieve anything tangible in its war on the terrorist organizations. On the contrary, it has allowed the terrorist organization ISIL and its satellites and allies to expand, move and deploy freely, not only in Syria and Iraq but also in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Tunisia, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and even at the heart of certain Western States whose behaviour and political discourse encourage their terrorist actions.

- If any State invokes the excuse of counter-terrorism in order to be present on Syrian territory without the consent of the Syrian Government, whether on the country's land or in its airspace or territorial waters, its actions shall be considered a violation of Syrian sovereignty. Combating terrorism on Syrian territory requires close cooperation and coordination with the Syrian Government in accordance with the counter-terrorism resolutions of the Security Council.

- In order genuinely to fight terrorism, the Governments and agencies of Britain, Australia and France should stop exporting extremist terrorists to Syria and refrain from providing them with logistical support and a media platform from which to spread their obscurantist, destructive ideology.

- The Syrian Arab Republic stresses that the United Kingdom, Australia and France must respect the resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015), all of which stress that States must respect the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. Those States must also cease violating and distorting the meaning of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative